

Moving from Principles to Practice

*A Set of Model Resources for Missouri
Charter Public School Sponsors*

DEVELOPED BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS



About NACSA

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is a professional resource for authorizers and other education leaders who work to achieve quality public charter schools. NACSA's mission is *to achieve the establishment and operation of quality charter schools through responsible oversight in the public interest*. We believe that quality authorizing plays a critical role in creating and sustaining quality charter schools. A quality charter school is characterized by high student achievement, financial stewardship, and responsible governance and management. Charter schools can improve public education by creating greater educational opportunities for students and educators and greater educational accountability for public schools.

NACSA Board of Directors 2009

NACSA's Board of Directors is comprised of a revered group of education advocates who have been on the front lines of the reform movement and who represent a diverse portfolio of educational institutions, districts, school boards, and non-profits. NACSA President & CEO, Greg Richmond, served as founding chairman of the Board in 2000, and stepped up to become NACSA's President in 2005. The Board is chaired by James Goenner, who heads the Center for Charter Schools at Central Michigan University. The NACSA Board of Directors meets six times annually to oversee strategic planning, organizational leadership and finances.

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Introduction

In opening its doors, a charter school commits to providing quality public education to all students and families who choose to attend the school. In approving an application, the charter school sponsor commits to providing operational autonomy to the school and performance-based accountability to the public.

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) has been pleased to work with Missouri charter school sponsors and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to improve the quality of the state's charter schools in St. Louis and Kansas City.

It is NACSA's vision that all families have choices among high quality public schools that meet their children's needs. Our mission is to achieve the establishment and operation of quality charter schools through responsible oversight in the public interest. We focus our work on improving the knowledge and skill of the entities that approve, oversee and evaluate charter schools.

Recognizing the need to improve authorizer capacity by strengthening practice, policies and laws, NACSA developed a Priority State Initiative that calls for the organization to make a multi-year commitment to states where charter schools have the potential to make deep and lasting improvements to public education. NACSA's Priority State work focuses on improving authorizing practices and charter school policies and communications—all in the name of increasing student achievement.

In 2007, NACSA identified Missouri as a Priority State, and began several initiatives to strengthen sponsor practice, and subsequently charter school quality, within Missouri. Specifically, the process of establishing performance expectations and holding charter schools accountable to meeting those expectations became an area of focus for NACSA's work with Missouri charter school sponsors.

Based on input from Missouri charter public school sponsors and the MO DESE, NACSA has developed a series of model documents and instructional guides. The purpose of these documents is providing sponsors with the resources they need to provide proper oversight of their schools.

The following represent a culmination of national best practices in charter school sponsorship and requirements specific to Missouri charter school law. We strongly encourage all Missouri charter public school sponsors to adopt the following Application, Application Evaluation Rubric, Charter Agreement, Pre-Opening Requirements, Performance Plan, and Monitoring Plan and to use the accompanying guidance in their pursuit of ensuring that Missouri's charter public schools do indeed offer all families in St. Louis and Kansas City high quality public school choice options.

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